



HER MISSION
BY
THE MOTHER
OF
GRACE STRONG



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

752379
Chap. Copyright No.

Shelf 534

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



GRACE STRONG.

HER MISSION.

By the Mother of Grace Strong.

Mary E. Strong

*Composed in memory of Grace Strong,
by her blind mother.*



* COLUMBUS, O.:
WILLIAM G. HUBBARD & CO.
1888.



PS 2959
S54

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1888

By MARY E. STRONG,

In the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington, D C.


ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

DEDICATION.

To that one who for years was my hope and my comfort, who in great tribulation was my chief consolation, who in my blindness loaned me her eyes to guide my footsteps, but who now sings with the angels, my beloved daughter, Grace Strong, this book is affectionately dedicated by her mother,

M. E. STRONG.

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

 AS WE offer this book to the public, we cannot better express ourselves than by giving the statement we made at the time of Grace Strong's death :

ANOTHER WARRIOR FALLS IN BATTLE; ANOTHER LIFE
GONE UP TO THE HIGH COURT AS A WITNESS
AGAINST THE SERPENT OF THE STILL.

Grace Strong, the talented author of the thrilling temperance story entitled "The Worst Foe," died suddenly at Atlanta, Ga., May 15, 1887. Her home was in Minnesota, but she had spent the winter in the South, taking care of her invalid mother. But the invalid mother brought her lifeless body back, and buried it in Northern soil.

Her beautiful, yet sadly thrilling story, "The Worst Foe," was wrought out of the fires of bitter experience. She wrote us that some things in the book were but counterparts of her own experience, and many other parts were facts from her own observation. She wove these together with the silver thread of romance, and dressed

it in a little drapery of imagination. This is why Pres. Trueblood says, "One can scarcely persuade himself that it is a story at all, and his heart grows hot with righteous indignation at the wrong after wrong which meets him as he reads on."

As you read it you will say that for her "the furnace was heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be." The battle she waged was like the fierce "Battle of the Lava Beds." But the enemy will writhe under his wounds till other forces extinguish him.

Though she, like Haddock and Gambrell, may seem to have gone down under the odds of the enemy, yet when the great books of the High Court are opened, these will be found the greatest conquerors of their time. "Though the worker falls the work goes on," is especially true in her case. Her book which has thrilled and instructed *thousands* will yet influence and inspire *tens of thousands*, and perhaps reach the wish expressed by Gen. Fisk and John B. Finch, that it may be 'read by the millions.'

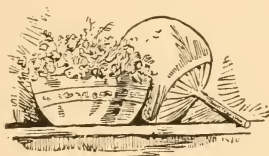
"The Worst Foe," of which Grace Strong was the author, is now in its 9th edition. And all the thousands that have read it are ready to speak its praises. We are sure that many who have become friends of Grace Strong through reading her book, will want this story of her life by her

aged, blind mother. We make no apology for this book—buy it, read it. The mother needs the little it will cost you, and we doubt not you will think you have got the worth of your money. One of the great editors of Chicago wrote us, saying, “Grace Strong was a noble heroine; her story is of thrilling interest.” Another editor wrote, “Grace Strong will have a warm corner in the hearts of all who read her book.”

With faith in the ultimate triumph of truth over error, we are yours for God and humanity,

THE PUBLISHERS.

COLUMBUS, O., Sept. 1888.





INTRODUCTION.

BY MRS. FINCH, WIDOW OF THE LATE JNO. B. FINCH.



RS. STRONG, the aged and blind mother, had the courage of Milton when she wrote the history of her daughter's life. Only those who have had the sad experience of preparing the biography of a departed friend, know the anxiety, the prayers, and the pathos, that lie hidden in the warp of this volume. Upon it let us set the seal of our appreciation.

It was my privilege to meet Grace Strong in the summer of 1886. It was then I learned to know the quite unassuming girl who had undertaken the formidable task of describing that modern Hercules, "The Worst Foe." The young and beautiful girl had dedicated her life to her Master's work and taken for her text, "Work, for the night cometh."

This timid girl said to me : "Mrs. Finch, have you read

my book? I would like to know what you and your husband think of it." Seemingly unconscious that she had written more than a sketch, scarcely believing she had by her masterly creation thrown a dynamite bomb into the ranks of the enemy that would help create a prohibition sentiment enduring forever, yet bringing interesting narrative to the aid of reform with a touch of genius that is impressive, convincing and incontrovertible, helping to bury intemperance in "the grave of eternal death, with prohibition as an immortal monument in its place."

Grace was brave and heroic when she attacked the enemy of the home, fearless in her description of the liquor traffic, thrilling in her pictures of experience, and scathing in her denunciation. She hurled the weapon of educated and cultivated thought, supported by a christian conscience, against the great and mighty evil of the nineteenth century. From this contest, the battle-field of live issues, Grace responded to the call of home duty, watching long and weary months by the side of her invalid mother. This brave girl did not know what it was to falter or fail in the thickest of this struggle on the world's battle-field of reform, but the thought of being separated from her beloved mother, as she anxiously watched her back to life, wore the body until the silver cord was loosed.

“Then fell upon the house a sudden gloom,
A shadow on these features fair and thin;
And softly, from that hushed and darkened room,
Two angels issued, where but one went in.”

Physically exhausted, she laid off that garment, the body, and entered that silent city where the innumerable dwell; the city so silent to us, about which we know so little, but, we believe, the home where the immortal are at liberty to complete their work left unfinished.

“The spirit-world around this world of sense
Floats like an atmosphere, and everywhere
Wafts through these earthly mists and vapors dense
A vital breath of more ethereal air.

“Our little lives are kept in equipoise
By opposite attractions and desires;
The struggle of the instinct that enjoys,
And the more noble instinct that aspires.

“These perturbations, this perpetual jar
Of earthly wants and aspirations high,
Come from the influence of an unseen star,
An undiscovered planet in our sky.

“And as the moon from some dark gate of cloud
Throws o’er the sea a floating bridge of light,
Across whose trembling planks our fancies crowd
Into the realms of mystery and night.

“So from the world of spirits there descends
A bridge of light, connecting it with this,
O'er whose unsteady floor, that sways and bends,
Wander our thoughts above the dark abyss.”

FRANCES E. FINCH.

Evanston, Ill., July, 1888.



AUTHOR'S BRIEF PREFACE.

MANY questions are asked me concerning the life of my beloved daughter, Grace Strong, whose work, "The Worst Foe," has been read by thousands, and pronounced by competent critics the "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in liberating the slaves from the curse of Rum.

Knowing that the public must be interested in one whose life was so full of promise, but who was cut off so early in her youth—yet not before she had accomplished a world of good and helped to set in motion the grand work that is to redeem the land—I have consented to give the sad story of her life in rhyme. I place these lines before the reader for truth, not for criticism; in simplicity, not in eloquence;—the tired heart has no aspiration for earthly laurels or praise.

MRS. M. E. STRONG.

Atwater, Minnesota, Sept. 4, 1888.





Her Mission.

INTRODUCTION.

IN a land where snow-clad hill-tops,
Ice-covered branches bending low,
Hazel bushes, grass and flowers,
Buried deep beneath the snow;

Where the snow-capped roofs of houses,
With cycled cornice hanging low,
Clouds of smoke arise from chimneys,
Playing over ice and snow;

Hushed the sound of rippling waters,
And songsters with their mates have flown,
Shrieks from wild and hungry monsters,
As they through the forests roam;

Cold winds strike the highest key-note,
And then repeat the soft refrain;
Formed by frost are leaves and flowers,
Stamped upon the window-pane;


Thus amid the blast of winter,
When the year had just begun,
Frost obscured the snow and heavens,
Sun-dogs chased the setting sun;

A little infant came unto me,
But only for a while to keep,—
In my arms I took and blessed her
As she lay in baby sleep.



CHAPTER I.

My Little Sister.

 HAVE got a little sister,"
Said my boy of summers three;
"Mamma, I'll be good forever,
Will she always stay with me?"

Weeks have come and gone forever,
Days of hope and days of fear,
Indians came and told their friendship,
Then we thought no danger near.

I thought my babe almost immortal,
I saw the angel in her face;
Then a name came to me for her,
And I called my baby "Grace."

Oh, my tender, little infant!
Oh, my precious baby Grace!
Still I see amaze and wonder
As you look up in my face.


My little man is standing by me,
Looking more than he can tell.
"I'll give sister all my playthings,
'Cause I like her very well."

A sound was heard; the door then opened,
A tall, dark savage entered in.
His features wore no look of malice,
Rather confidence he'd win.

"I have got a little sister,"
Said my boy with looks of fear.
The savage did not look toward him,
Neither did he seem to hear.

CHAPTER II.

The War Dance.

" *H-WHE-IPA, wamin-izum:—*"
Bread and corn, we understood.
Eliza brought what he asked for;
He said, "Wash-ta," which means good.

Again addressed he in Sioux language,
As he stood with outstretched hand,
While we, his awe-struck, silent listeners,
Did all we could to understand.

His brow grew dark in sudden anger,
As with tomahawk, knife and gun,
Blanket falling from his shoulders,
He the war-dance then begun.


I pressed my children to my bosom—
Oh, I cannot tell how long;
I heard the clash of steel above me,
A savage yell, and he was gone.

Long we sat and deep we pondered
O'er the words which we had heard,
With mute lips and ashen faces,
Neither of us spoke a word.

When at last the household gathered,
We told the story best we could.
Then we knew not all his meaning,
Use our reason best we would.

CHAPTER III.

Umpashio's Story.

AKOTA, tee-pas-o-ta,
Li-na-no, wash-ta do,
Dakota's, se-chee se-chee,
Ink-pa-du-da see-chee-do.

“Da-ko-tas ota-ota,
No puck-a-chee, te-how
Wa-se-cha, squaws papoosa,
All ne-po minio-cow.”

With many tents here come the Indians,
Cold, deep snow, add no relief;
Indians' bad hearts full of murder,
“Ink-pa-du-tah is bad chief.”

Those bad Indians will not leave us,
Great and small much trouble make;
Men and women, little children,
Were murdered there at Spirit Lake.

CHAPTER IV.

The Timely Visitor.

THE long night passed, day is dawning,
And morning light allays our fear,
But hark! what is now the trouble?
There are footsteps drawing near.


Stay, oh stay! it is a white man;
Hasten now, unbolt the door.
Markham enters, meets a welcome
As he never did before.

“Do you of Spirit Lake bring tidings?”
We all speaking in a breath,
For he had within his keeping
Words of either life or death.

As he spoke we gathered round him,
With trembling forms and pulses quick,
Words that followed blanched our faces,
Made the very heart grow sick.

CHAPTER V.

Spirit Lake by Moonlight.

IND reader, will you go with me?
Come, the journey we can make
Over ice and towering snow-drifts—
Reader, this is Spirit Lake.

The full moon has now arisen,
No dark clouds obscure the light,
The stars seem like accusing spirits,
Looking down upon the sight.

Here was once the home of Gardiner's;
Oh! but see how great the change.
Doors broke in, no sound of voices,
Scattered glass from window-panes.

Ah, well indeed do I remember,
Standing near that maple tree,
Abigail was by her mother,
Eliza was to go with me.

“Mother, sister, you’ll not be lonely
In this loved spot while I’m gone.
Good-bye, mother, Abbie darling,—
No, I’ll not stay very long.”

In the farewell time of Autumn,
Birds have flown to warmer climes,
When the careless grow more serious,
While thoughts revert to olden times.

Here the lakes, with sky-tint waters,
Come together—form a link;
Shining sand with shells and pebbles
Are washed back from the water’s brink.

Maple, oak trees and black walnut,
Majestic stand on either side,
Sparkling waves and foaming white-caps,
Dancing over finny tribe.

Subdued rays of autumn sunshine,
Mingled with the golden leaves,
Drop, drop, drop, the nuts and acorns
Falling down from laden trees.

I'll pass on and dwell no longer
On good-bye words and parting scenes ;
Thanks be to our God forever,
For the veil that drops between.

And yet stay a little longer,
I would see this place once more.
Oh horror! what is before me?
Mrs. Gardiner dead before the door!

The pale rays of moonlight shining
Inward through the open door
Brings to view three more bodies,
Lying dead upon the floor.

There are others, oh where are they?
They are fallen on the snow,
Faces turned toward the heavens,
Faces that I used to know.

The family all foully murdered!
No ; one is missing, no mistake!
Where is Abbie, gentle Abbie ?
Worse than death must be her fate.

Where are they, the savage monsters,
Fiends of darkness, have they fled?
Fled from this, their savage fury,
Wreaked upon defenseless head?

No, not fled; they are now sleeping
In places taken from the dead.
Near them, scalps still warm and bleeding,
Snatched from many a victim's head.

The pale moon shining while they slumbered,
Cold wind's moan and whispering sigh
Adding to the gloom around us,—
Let us quietly pass by.

Yes, pass on, and leave forever
This once loved spot, Spirit Lake;
Close our eyes to scenes around us,
That horror spare us for our sake.

But stop, we can go no farther,
Human gore is on the snow!
See, the dead are all around us,
Whither, whither shall we go?

Here the aged, whose steps were feeble,
Hollow cheeks and thin, gray hair ;
Here the youthful, brave and manly,
Impulsive, quick to do or dare.

Here are those in strength of manhood,
Men of thought and fertile brain ;
Youth and age are thus together,
Mingled here among the slain.

Brave hearts never flinching,
Pressing onward through the snow,
To gain a place that was safer,
To fortify against the foe.

One by one the bullets pierce them,
A savage yell, the battle 's o'er.
Many shots have struck one body,—
The last man falls, to rise no more.

Mothers standing with their infants ;
Little children—loving wives—
Indians now rush down upon them
With tomahawks and scalping knives.

They have fallen, it is over,
All is peace and quiet there ;
Cries of terror, prayers for mercy,
Are borne away on wintry air.

Mothers reaching for their children
With arms outstretched, stilled in death,
Calling for their tender infants
Even with their parting breath.

On the snow cold winds are playing
With golden curls and auburn hair,
Death of torture not despoiled them,
Beauty traces linger there.

A building burned a few steps farther,
The place our heroes sought to gain ;
Some had entered there for safety
But to perish in the flame.

Moon's pale face seemed draped in mourning,
A thick, black vale spreads o'er the sky,
My soul turns sick at sight of bloodshed,—
Other scenes I must pass by.

And leave four women bound in fetters,
While their captors round them sleep;
They are prisoners, they the mourners,
O'er the dead their lone watch keep.

My heart sore with clinging memories—
I would, dear friends, I had told you all;
Many deeds too dark to mention
At Spirit Lake,—the curtains fall.

[Markham's home was at Spirit Lake. After being absent about three days, he turned homeward, reaching that place two o'clock at night, on snow-shoes. Becoming confused and lost, he first came to the home of the Gardiners, and seeing the family as described in the verses he turned to flee from the spot; and only going a few steps found himself in the midst of the dead as described. And on a few steps farther he found himself in the midst of the Indians in deep slumber. The moon at the time shone very bright, and there came a thick, black cloud over the moon which aided him to escape, without which he thinks he would have been discovered. Going on and finding himself in a ravine, not daring to venture farther, he hid until break of day, when he made his way to our place with his feet badly frozen.]

CHAPTER VI.

The Journey by Night.



THE sun has set in gathering darkness,
And the night is piercing cold,
I go forth with my two children,
Little Grace but five weeks old.

All in haste we now have started
To go a short way, just three mile ;
Shoveling snow and lifting runners,
Urging horses all the while.

God is good and shows us favor,
We have reached the place at last ;
Pale and anxious faces greet us,
While o'er all a gloom is cast.


All is under preparation
For defense against the foe.
They're only few in number.
Little strength too well we know.

Men and women now say, " Courage."
With now and then a cheering word ;
Each face tells the tale of sorrow,
Of the thoughts their memory stirred.



CHAPTER VII.

The Petition.


E petition them for soldiers,
Signed and sealed by prayers and tears,
Lives are hanging on a moment.
Memory weeps in after years.

Two young men then were chosen,
Bravely answering, "We will go
And bear the message to Fort Ridgely,
Many miles through ice and snow."

Brave young heroes, realizing
Peril and danger all around.
"Courage," they say, "We will not forsake you.
Never cease till help is found."

CHAPTER VIII.

Peril and Danger.

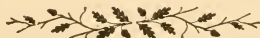
EWS again of our great danger,
Is there for us no relief?
Dread of Indians, death and torture,
Cheeks again are wet with grief.

Is there no hope? If but only
Some kind angel would draw near,
Whispering words of hope and rescue—
Angel of mercy, dost thou hear?

Time, oh Time, why dost thou linger?
No, I stay, it nears our fate.
Dread suspense! Time, speed quickly!
The fear and anguish is too great.

Oh, my Grace, my darling baby,
How oft I've bathed your face in tears,
While you only look in wonder;
Smile, sweet babe, you know no fears.

My little son is clinging to me,
Whispering "Mamma, what shall we do?
When they come, the Indians, mamma,
Will they kill my sister, too?"



CHAPTER IX.

Thoughts of Other Days.

FROM the depths of love's deep fountain
Thoughts arise of other years,
Thoughts of those I know will mourn me,
Weep for me with bitter tears.

Then before the mental vision,
I see my mother kneel in prayer,
While among her shining tresses
Silver threads are mingled there.

With bowed head I see my father,
Hand supports his care-worn brow,
In his eyes the tears are trembling,
He is thinking of me now.

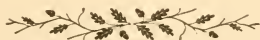
They will ne'er caress my children,
Never see my little Grace;
Tho' they fain would hold and bless her,
They'll never see her cherub face.

Farewell, then, dear home of childhood,
Friend and kindred, all farewell.
Who will bear this message to you?
Who will then the story tell?

Mothers soothe their little children,
Husbands look on fair, young wives,
Shuddering as the thoughts steal o'er them
Of deeds far worse than taking lives.

Thankful hearts now greet the morning,
On her wing renewed hopes come.
No cup of sorrow e'er so bitter,
That sweet remains for every one.

All fall into line of duty,
Our weary task is done once more.
Thus the time is slowly passing,
Night brings terror as before.



CHAPTER X.

Umpashio.

BREAKFAST time, we're still at table,
Indian coming to the door;
Guard cries out, "It's old Umpashio!"
Reader has heard of him before.

Quickly, then, the order 's given,
"Open door and let him in."
For the moment all 's excitement
O'er the message he will bring.

Our men try to interview him;
Feigning ignorance he swerved,
Turns away from those who questioned,
While he uttered not a word.

Room was made before the fire,
Food was brought for him to eat.
Many were the questions asked him,
But no answer yet they meet.

Markham speaks to old Umpashio,
Tells the deeds at Spirit Lake ;
Umpashio's glance toward Eliza
Betokens guilt, and no mistake.

Then to him we spoke emphatic,
"Tell us our danger ere you go."
O'er his face he drew the blanket,
Swayed his body to and fro.

This to us his only answer ;
And yet Umpashio went away,
We no wiser for his coming—
Gone to come another day.

CHAPTER XI.

Is Umpashio Friend or Foe ?



HEN and there was held a council ;
"Is old Umpashio friend or foe ?
Who can understand an Indian,
In what way, then, can we know ?


Then again I told the story
Our readers have already heard;
Told again about the war-dance,
Once again repeat his word.

At that time he would have warned us,
If we could have gone away,
We would have escaped the danger,
I believe unto this day.

"He's a traitor," was repeated,
"And a prisoner he shall be.
If he comes he'll not escape us."
"Wont he? wait and we will see."

CHAPTER XII.

Black Buffalo.*

ELCOME morn, again we hail thee!
Will relief but come to-day,
We be saved from death and torture,
Fear and dread be cast away?

* Black Buffalo was hung at Mankato after the outbreak of the Sioux in '62.

Eyes grew bright with expectation,
Sound of footsteps in the snow;
It is only old Umpashio
Coming with Black Buffalo.

One comes in, both bold and daring,
Piercing glance and angry frown,
Quick to answer, bold to question;
The other stands with eyes cast down.


Thoughts arise, the truth is dawning,
We now think we understand;
Buffalo, both shrewd and cunning,
Is one of Ink-pa-du-da's band.

“Let the Indians go; if we detain them
'T will imperil every one.
Show no fears, but treat them kindly,
Soon our troubles will be done.”



CHAPTER XIII.

The Spies.

ORNING wings, it is now noon-day,
The dusky forms are at the door;
The door unfastens and then is opened—
Indians enter as before.


Buffalo, with eyes like eagle's,
Takes in all at single glance,
Counting strength, reserving prisoner's,
Calculating in advance.

Do Indians know we have sent for soldiers?
Bitter thoughts do now arise;
Like hungry wolves tracked our heroes,
With Buffalo and daring spies.

He is looking at Eliza,
Now he casts his glance on me.
I am holding little Gracie,
And our fate is plain to see.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Expected Attack.

PIES have gone, all is confusion,
Bleeding hearts and aching brain;
Reason is dethroned among us,
One poor mother is insane.

All is ready, watching, waiting,
Each with loaded gun in hand;
“If they come they will pay dearly,”
Is resolved by all the band.

Darkest hour before the morning—
Mourning cannot always last;
And the sun shines ne’er so brightly,
But dark clouds may overcast.


Time is passing, no foe ’proacheth,
Curtains of night drop down once more;
Peace as a vapor falls upon us,
Death is waiting at the door.

Welcome day of early Springtime,
Sun-kissed snow will soon give way ;
Nature renews inspiration,
Bids fear and gloom depart to-day.

Spies are coming, hearts grow heavy,
The mental sky with clouds o'ercast,
Dreams of peace a moment linger
Like radiant beams too bright to last.

CHAPTER XV.

Umpashio's Address.

HEY are making signs of friendship,
Umpashio first to speak to-day ;
Searching eyes now flash upon him,
And note each word he has to say.

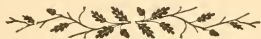
He said: "I've been long among you,
Have pierced the mark with gun and bow,
We've chased the elk and deer together,
I'm Da-ko-ta, wash-ta-do."

“Buffalo friendly to wa-see-cha,
To Ink-pa-du-da he 's a foe,
He wants peace with white people,
Wash-ta Indian Buffalo.”

He then spake of Ink-pa-du-da—
Said he and warriors had all gone;
Squaws, papooses, with their prisoners,
Had “Puck-a-chee'd from minio-con.”

“Ink-pa-du-da 'fraid of soldiers,
Chief and warriors all took fright;
They will spill no more white blood.
Peace, wa-se-cha, day and night.”

Exhausted nature seeks for slumber,
Heavy eyes now close in sleep;
On wings of time hours pass quickly,
While lone stars their vigils keep.



CHAPTER XVI.

F^orebodings.

GOME and gone are days of sunshine,
Bare the tree-tops that we scan,
Thus far kept in ark of safety,
Peace and freedom are at hand.

The sun has set and still there lingers
Red tints along the western sky,
Color returns to lips and faces
Soul speaks to soul, thro' beaming eye.

Order given for preparation
To return to every home,
Not hearing now all that is passing,
I stand apart in fear alone.

Friends condole with kindly interest,
I hear them saying as they pass,
"I fear, poor lady, her mind weakens!"
Then retire so sad, alas!

Children running hither, thither,
My little hero cries with joy,
“Wicked Indians have give up coming
Say, mamma, do you see your boy?”

One by one I see them going,
In my heart I say “farewell!”
Each good-bye word, tho’ lightly spoken,
Sounds to me a funeral knell.

Still I’m holding little Gracie,
Clasped in a mother’s fond embrace;
Start with fright as in a mirror
I see a pale and haggard face.

But few remain, and now they scatter,
My husband is to go away;
“I must speak before you leave me,
Blood-thirsty Indians will come to-day.”



CHAPTER XVII.

"My Babe is Two Months Old To-day."



TWO months old is little Grace—
People passing to and fro
Stop a moment at her cradle,
To look at baby, ere they go.

The clock strikes twelve,—the hour to dine,
The bugle sounds, and memory's stirred,
Coming to the call they enter,
And names of foes no longer heard.

The meal is over, men are ready
For pleasure out of doors once more.
A question rises for discussion,
Again they are halting at the door.

"Where's my boy?" I ask this moment,
Quickly start to go and see,
Hasty foot-steps, passing by me
One quick voice shouts, "Go back!" to me.

“ Indians coming ! no, ’tis soldiers,
They are dressed in white men’s clothes.”
I look for James but do not find him,
Again I ask,—but no one knows.

“ James, my son,” in vain I call him ;
Again I start to pass the door,
The same voice shouts : “ It is the Indians.”
The warning came, he speaks no more.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Attack.

ROARING guns and cries of terror,
Voices now are raised in prayer :
Moans of dying, groans of wounded,
Mingle on the mid-day air.


Where is my son, my little comfort ?
Oh, my darling, come back once more.
Is he taken ? Did they slay him,
While at play outside the door ?

Fiercely now the battle rages,
Shot and bullets round us fly;
Reinforcement for the Indians,
“Women arm now!” is the cry.

I try to soothe my frightened baby,
My boy comes from his hiding place,
And like an aspen leaf he trembles,
While blood stains his hands and face.

CHAPTER XIX.

Escape Under Cover of Darkness.

HE hush of death now is reigning,
Save panting breath, no sound we hear.
Black wings of night are hovering o'er us,
Hearts grow faint with sickening fear.

We think once more of burning buildings,
And murdered ones at Spirit Lake.
Marvel not if seized with frenzy,
We try to hide with hearts that ache.

Who can forget the struggling wounded,
With racking pains and aching feet,
Out in the snow we now are going,
Darkness covers our retreat.

In the deep snow and chill of night air,
Quick we try to wend our way.
Down, down, down, our feet are sinking;
Prostrate in the drift we lay.

Tossing, bounding as on billows,
Little Grace before me lies.
Feeling for her in the darkness,
“Hush my babe, oh hush your cries!”

Sorely vibrate cords of memory,
As scenes of past before me rise,
Memory wakes when bid to slumber,
Tears fall from my sightless eyes.

Again I see my starving baby,
The tiny form of little Grace,
I see again the marks of suffering
Stamped upon her thin, white face.

In midnight hours, at noon and evening,
I hear an infant's suffering wail.
Poor, tired heart must bear the torture,
Wounds can not heal, 'till memory fail.

The blood-stained face of my child hero
Comes before me, asks for bread.
Once again a voice is saying:
"Lay down your babe if she is dead."

Patient mothers, still I see them
Wipe the scalding tears away,
As our cold and starving children
Plead for bread both night and day.

Onward, onward, we are going;
Falling, plunging in the snow.
Needle of compass now directs us,—
Points the course which we're to go.

Onward, onward, footsteps faltering,
Demands are made on nerve and will;
The sun has risen, now 'tis setting,
We are pressing onward still.

At last we are coming to a cabin,
Find ears of corn in place of bread,
Eager hands are reaching for it,
On which our hungry babes are fed.

Here we meet with five more persons,
Who have just made their escape,
All the rest of friends and neighbors
Are with the dead at Spirit Lake.

CHAPTER XX.

Fear and Danger.

INDIANS prowling through the country,
We can stay no longer here,
We are starving and in danger,
Indians may be very near.

With bruised limbs and tattered garments,
We start again ; our progress slow.
Cut, worn, shoes ill protecting
Bleeding feet, now mark the snow.

By day and night still struggling onward,
Our wet garments freezing now,
With toil and fear the blood is stirring,
Drops of sweat are on each brow.

“Don’t like traveling,” my boy is saying,
“Mamma, is my sister dead?
Don’t cry, mamma, I’ll be quiet,
I wont ask no more for bread.”

Courage, failing, exhausted bodies
Are sinking down along the way,
My poor, weak babe no longer crying,
As passive in my arms she lay.

CHAPTER XXI.

Watch and Wait.

BY my side is faithful Eliza,
Sight grows dim, my strength fails fast,
“Courage,” once again she whispers,
“I’ll stay with you till the last.”

What do they say? are senses failing?
 " 'Tis Indians!" I hear them cry.
We have suffered, oh we've suffered--
 At last, at last, then we must die.

Fifteen are numbered, now there's many
 Coming in at rapid rate.
Now they halt, are looking at us,
 While we can only watch and wait.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Four Travelers.

IT IS evening, cold winds blowing,
 Gathering clouds obscure the light,
Four men traveling now seek shelter
 Where man and beast may pass the night.

The hour is midnight, the owls hoo, hoo,
 As if their misery to mock,
Answer comes to midnight neighbors,
 " Hoo, hoo, hoo," 'tis four o'clock.

Near a house the beasts are standing,
Covered o'er with frost and foam,
Strangers knock at door for entrance,
Echo answers no one to home.

Door ajar, they push it open,
The house is vacant, they remain,
Strike a light, and start a fire,
Food from their store they quickly bring.

On the hearth a kettle simmers,
The fire throws out a cheering blaze,
In a corner, blanket-covered,
An object, on which one fixed his gaze.

Still he looks while he is thinking,
Says aloud, "What can that be?"
Was it not an angel whispered,
"Go, quickly look, and you will see."

A meagre breakfast has been taken,
Strangers will no longer wait,
"Four miles they say will end the journey."
The men now start for Spirit Lake.

The thinker's eye turned to the corner,
"Go quickly," again the whisper hears,
The cover removed, a sight revealing,
Haunting mem'ry in after years.

Wide open eyes are turned toward them,
With parted lips, as if in prayer.
Marks of hatchet tells the story,
Seven forms lie murdered there.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A Cry for Volunteers.


AT FORT Dodge in early morning,
When people hurry on the street,
While around a crowd is gathered,
These four brave men, with bleeding feet.

Standing by them is a veteran,
His locks white with frost of years.
Cheers anon, while he is speaking
Calling now for volunteers.

One hundred and thirty men have started,
Marching on through ice and snow,
Coming to rescue, Heaven bless them,
Ready to meet the savage foe.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Last Farewell.

OME have left their homes forever,
Have said in haste their last good-bye,
For they perish with cold and hunger,
On beds of snow alone to die.


Gently sleep, beloved brothers,
Your lives for others have been given,
You've now a star in crown immortal,
And that star's name is known in Heaven.

Cold winds changed to gentle zephyrs,
Beds of snow have passed away;
Birds have built their nests in branches
Bending over where they lay.

Trees have shed their leaves for covering,
Wild ivy wanders o'er the spot;
Natures hand has placed beside them,
The meek-eyed flower, Forget-me-not.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Rescue.

RTIST, can you paint the picture?
The task then will you undertake ?
Then I say commence your labors,
While we watch what you may make.

They raised their guns to fire upon us,
And again they hesitate,
Now they advance again toward us,
We can only watch and wait.

Saved, we are saved ! thank God forever !
Saved, we're saved ! no more fears.
A hundred men are gathering round us,
Yes, it is the volunteers.

A startled cry, it is Eliza,
With bleeding feet her shoes are gone,
Thus she meets the man who loves her,—
Here I let the curtain down.

Lieutenant Church caressed his children—
Met his gentle wife's embrace,
Pressed the hand of wounded sister,
Looking up in her pale face.

The white-haired soldier stands before us
Who fought the battles of Mexico,
From his eyes the tears are falling
As we sink upon the snow.


Quickly volunteers make ready,
With willing hands and moistened eyes,
For us famishing, starving creatures
Something to eat, from their supplies.

Children with food their mouths filling,
Both hands full my boy doth call,
“Don't eat quite so fast, now will you?
I'm afraid you'll get it all.”

League or more to nearest woodland
Soldiers now prepare the way.
Our encampment gave the title
Of Camp Grove until this day.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Scene of Bloodshed.

OVING on the scene of bloodshed,—
Still marching on, they know no fears
Their blood is hot with indignation—
It is our brave, brave volunteers.

We are saved, yes are rescued,
From the hand of savage foe.
Does this end my painful story,
Do you ask ? I answer no.

Two weeks gone with my two children,
Lying on a bunch of hay
A floor of earth, earth roof covered,—
I am permitted here to stay.

Where are they who suffered with me,
While their friendship still I mourn?
They are seeking restoration
From the hardships they have borne.

Where the father of my children?
With the soldiers he has gone.
Here I'm waiting, watching, waiting,
And as yet he does not come.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Sons and Daughters of Erin.

HEAVY rains and days of sunshine,
Snow most gone, high waters sway,
Creeks and rivers, overflowing,
Are taking many a bridge away.

“Bad luck to ye’z, Indians are comin’,”
Thus the son of Erin spake,
“It’s scalps they want, it’s time they’re
cheated,—
Ither quarters ye must sake.

“ And what will ye be afther doin’?
Bad luck, poor lady, it is indade!
An’ sure to the house she’s welcome
If it is ye’z not afraid.”

Sobs arose and checked my utterance,
While I could not tell my grief;
As I sat in daze and wonder,
And for a time had no relief.

Bowing down o’er my two children,
I could not raise my soul in prayer;
The Infinite God look down in pity
On me the creature of His care.


Thy name is called: “ Oh, Griffith, Griffith,”
Save my dear children, do I pray!
Reader, he placed us in a wagon,
The heavy wheels then rolled away.

The people, seized with monomania,
Like deer before the hunter’s hound,
Rushing on through mud and water,
Some are lost and never found.

From east to west the wind is changing,
Falling rain has turned to sleet.
My children wrapped in soldiers' blankets,
And yet our comfort's incomplete

CHAPTER XXVIII.

On the Banks of the Cyllinder.

 **ANGRY** looking waters leaping,
Hissing, foaming down the tide ;
People to the brink are nearing
To pass unto the other side.

Narrow stream, but deep, relentless,
"No crossing here," the waters say.
"I will dash thee on my bosom,
Bear thee like the bridge away."

Just across some men are waiting,
As angels do, to bear us o'er;
Making ready for the transport,
Safely to the other shore.

A wagon-box is then made ready,
With long stout ropes securely tied
“Who’ll be first?” is now the question,
“To venture on this fearful ride?”

“Leave your boy, you cannot take him,
The babe is care enough for you.”
“I will not leave my boy,” I answered,
“If he must perish, I will too.”

They tell me if the box turns over,
To cling to it, let children go,—
I need not tell you my intention;
Go ask a mother she will, know.

We’ve reached the other shore, thank heaven,
“Take my boy out first,” I said.
Willing hands seize my poor darling
And lift him from his watery bed.

Safely o’er, our dripping garments
Freezing now around us fast,—
O’er again I live the moments,
Though long and weary years have passed.

“Don’t cry, son, I cannot help you.”


Clasping Gracie to my breast,
Praying God in mercy take us
Away from suffering,—home to rest.

With yoke taken from the oxen,
A fire is kindled on the bank,—
If these lines should be read by thee,
Griffith, knowest thou whom I thank.

One be one, they’re crossing over;
One by one, they’ve reached the shore;
Drawn by cords the bark returneth
To bear another sufferer o’er.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Another Crossing.

AIT one moment while reflecting
On this picture, painful true,
Brings to mind another crossing;
Death’s cold river comes in view.


A narrow stream, but all must cross it,
A low voice whispers, "Peace be still."
A bridge is built to span the waters
Of self-conceit and iron will.

On the shores are untold millions,
Rush down the valley in dismay,
View the stream, but find no crossing—
Their bridge of fancy swept away.

Blessed are they who take the life-boat,
Purchased by the Christ above,
Connecting links secure the transport,
The moving power *is cords of love.*

CHAPTER XXX.

Look Into the Future.

OW kind friends have gathered round me,
And they my present wants supply,
Again my little boy is happy,—
My poor, sick babe is warm and dry.

“How could she live?” you think and wonder,
A babe so young and tender too,
Reader, this, my only answer
Is, she had a work to do.

Hush, my dear, and I will tell you
The old, old story ever new ;—
How the Savior, when a baby
Young and helpless, just like you.


They sought His life; his mother Mary
Received the warning,—took her flight
With the blessed infant Jesus
In the darkness of the night.

He toiled for bread as he grew older,
As the poor and humble must.
Listen darling, while I tell you,
All that’s still in store for us.



CHAPTER XXXI.

Toil and Care.

S I toil on to make our living,
My little ones together play,
And their happy voices bless me,
While we plan a future day.

And ofttimes, when I was weary
From care and labor of the day,
Then my children became quiet,
And put their little toys away.

They would sit down close beside me,
And my thoughtful boy would say
“Cheer up, mamma, don’t be gloomy,
I will be a man some day.”

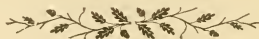
Quickly little Grace responding,
“While brother’s growing up a man
I’ll grow up to be a woman
And we will help you all we can.”

Then my precious child drew nearer,
And these words to me said she:
"It is right, for he is better;
You love brother more than me.

"If you do, I wont be selfish,
Your other little boys are gone;
Yes, they're gone to heaven and left us,
He is now your only son."

Then my little man was silent,
While a tear was in his eye.
As he'd say, "Don't talk so, sister,
For you see it makes ma cry."

Thus the time is passing quickly,
And I would not bid it stay,
"When my boy has grown to manhood,"
Was my thought by night and day.



CHAPTER XXXII.

Little Grace and Heaven.

“**A**RE you very tired, mamma,
Can you talk a little while?
I would like to ask you something;”
Said my sweet-voiced, darling child.

“Where is Heaven, mamma; tell me,
Is Heaven very far away?
I so much would like to go there
If I did not have to stay.

“I would go up to the angel,
The keeper of the pearly gate,
And say : ‘I want to see my brother,’
Would he tell me I must wait?

“If he did, then I would ask him
To let me in awhile for you;
The gate might swing on golden hinges,
Just enough to let me through.

“ I would look among the angels,
I know my brother must be there,
I remember you have told me
God had placed him in their care.

“ The angels would know I was a stranger,
And would lead me on the way,
I would hear their Heavenly music,
As on golden harps they play.

“ They would take me to my brother,
And smile with joy to see us meet;
My two brothers then would lead me
To walk upon the golden street.

“ I would tell them all about you
As we journeyed ; I would speak
Of how James and I have seen you,
So oft with tears upon your cheek.


‘ Then to them I’d tell our troubles ;
All that makes our mamma cry.
I’d remember all they answer,
And to you bring their reply.

“God is good, you say, and loves us,
He knows every thing we do.
May be he would tell the angels
Then to bring me back to you.”

As she talked the evening's zephyrs
Softly played around us where
The sparkling dew shone on the flowers,
Like angels made their toilet there.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Ashes of the Past.

HE flowers, they'll come again,
Shedding their leaves and fragrance where
My children dear together played,
They are now no longer there.

Birds have flown, as oft returned,
Singing notes of song the same,
There is missing in the cadence
A child's sweet voice in low refrain.

Mother's time is passing quickly,
Prize the moments as they fly;
Bear the toil, enjoy each pleasure,
Count the days as they go by.

Departed joys sometimes return,
As birds and flowers about our door.
Children's voices hushed forever,
Little footsteps come no more.

I hear other children playing,
And of my own, they me remind,
Fold your arms around me, memory,
Let me forget that I am blind.

Let my little ones come near me,
Let me see them in their plays,
Let me hear again their voices
As they planned for future days.

Let me, let me hear their singing,
As they sung in days ago.
Passers by would stop to listen,
Their sweet voices blent in song.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Man and Woman.

HIE looked-for time has come, dear reader,
My little boy is now a man ;
The child's plan with age maturing,
Is still to help me all he can.

No longer child, the household angel,
I see her turn aside from play,
I see her grown to be a woman
In her meek and gentle way.

Thoughtful and kind to all God's creatures,
That which I noted from her birth,
Is implanted in her nature,
More of Heaven than of earth.

She prized the beautiful in nature,
A lesson, she said, I learn each day,
Helping me to fill my mission.
When a child she oft would say :

"Life below is not worth living,
 If I cannot in some way
 Make the world a little better
 For my coming while I stay."

Pure in thought and pure in purpose,
 She beautified her soul with care,
 Flattering words passed by unheeded,
 No taint of vanity was there.


Only a picture of her features
 An artist's skill can trace,
 No brush can paint the inspiration,
 The soul expression of her face.

Mournful eyes, yet soft and tender;
 Long dark braids of shining hair
 Crown the shapely head, becoming,
 Though ringlets want to cluster there.

The soul-lit eyes seem ever speaking,
 While her lips still sweetly smiled,
 Winning the heart with love and kindness
 Of many a poor, neglected child.

CHAPTER XXXV.

My Son Keeps His Promise.

“ONLY a little longer, mother,
And the days of toil will cease,
In an easy chair our mother
Can then sit and take her ease.”

As my precious child was speaking,
She held a letter in her hand,
Blinding tears fall on the contents,
But tears of joy, and thus it ran :

“My own dear mother and my sister,
Your working days are of the past,
My reward for years of labor
Is a home for you at last.

“Soon the rooms will be in order,
Furnished in style that you like best,
Soon you’ll see me coming for you,
Then I’ll tell you all the rest.”

While the world is hushed in slumber,
Two thankful hearts are raised in prayer,
For all along our thorny pathway,
God has kept us in his care.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Home.

HOME at last, yes it is real,
The long expected time has come ;
The crowning day of a mother's glory
Is the dawning truth, a worthy son.

Think not, reader, I will tell you
Stone-front mansions, Avenue West,
Trees and flowers, a crystal fountain—
The view is one so picturesque.

From north to south the ground descends,
To a gate which fronts the street,
To the north the house is standing,
A common house, though plain and neat.

Here transplanted trees are growing,
 Pointing upward to the sky,
Here the red-breast loves to linger,
 While the summer days go by.

O'er the ground the grass and violets
 Form a carpeting of green ;
This our home, though unpretending,
 I'm as happy as a queen.

Small but neatly furnished parlor,
 James leads the way for us to view ;
“ Are you pleased ? ” his eyes a speaking.
 My reply I never knew.


Soft, rich carpet with deep border,
 Birds coming out from ferns and leaves,
Buds and flowers in modest colors,
 Which give the room a gentle ease.

Chandelier of painted flowers,
 Hangs down from ceiling overhead ;
Beneath is placed a center table,
 Covered with a dainty spread.

Near one corner stands a sofa,
While in place is here and there—
What to the weary is more inviting
Than an easy rocking-chair?

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Happiness and Contentment.

HE sun looks through half drawn curtains,
From the windows to the west;
“This is your chair,” James is speaking,
Mother, come, sit down and rest.

“Be seated sister, here’s your chair,
Tell me how you like the place.”
“I can’t tell now, for I’m too happy,”
Replied the innocent, child-like Grace.

I raised my eyes toward the speaker,
And looked into her pale, sweet face;
A brother’s eyes are fixed upon her,
The angel of the household—GRACE.

My thoughts go back to my infant,
The little boy of summers three,
When he said : " I'll be good forever,
Will she always stay with me ?"

The dining room attracts attention ;
With a cry of pure delight,
We view the table spread before us,
With deep fringed linen, pearly white,

With chinaware, and shining silver
Arranged with care and taste between
With brother's love and son's affection
The crowning joy of all the scene.

'Tis the supper hour, make ready,
Three chairs brought and put in place.
There we three sit down together,
Peace and joy is on each face.

The singer from the open window,
Trills and warbles all day long.
While a child-like voice outrivals,
With a sweetness in her song,

Household duties are a pleasure ;
My children always at my side.
Brother and sister are coversing,
A mother looking on with pride.

At home, the height of my ambition ;
I have my sorrows in the past.
But anon the thought steals o'er me,
Are these days too bright to last ?


In the early hours of evening,
As one by one appears each star,
Grace's fingers gently gliding
O'er the strings of her guitar.

Again I hear my children singing,
While I repress the rising tear,
A thought is passing or a whisper.
“ No happiness is real here.”



CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Dark Clouds.

ASS on, bright dream, do not linger,
For you only give me pain,
Only adding to the tumult
Of my wild and throbbing brain.

“Don’t cry, mother, God still loves us,
He will wipe our tears away.”
Still the low, sweet voice continued:
“There is for us a better day.”

Cherished hopes and fond affection,
Cause the tears again to start,—
Hope has fled, no longer lingers
Around my disappointed heart.

Her hands are pressed upon my temples,
Her tears are falling on my face.
As once more she tries to soothe me,
My ever faithful daughter Grace.

Day by day she sits beside me,
With words of hope she has in store.
My hungry eyes are fixed upon her,
But now I see my Grace no more.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

I Am Blind.

THE light of day has gone forever,
I, the thought distracts my mind,—
Must I feel my way in darkness?
Oh, can it be that I am blind?

I have gathered all the roses,
As the thorny way I passed;
But they were so few in number,
And their fragrance could not last.

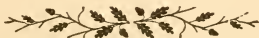
Providing for my helpless children,
Shielding them with love and care;
Suffering has endeared them to me,
I have gone to God for them in prayer.

Can I never more behold them,
Dearer than all the world beside?
They were my only earthly comfort,
They my only joy and pride.

Oh! thou who didst in love and mercy,
Touch the blind that they might see,
God in mercy, love and pity,
Oh, give back my sight to me!

“Don’t go, Grace, do not leave me,
Remember this your home shall be,
And you too must live here, mother,
You must not leave me, for you can’t see.”

My dear son is still my hero,
In temperance, honesty and truth,
Still retaining many virtues,
He displayed while in his youth.



CHAPTER XL.

Resignation.

MY sun has set on earth forever,
While our sky grows darker still,
I bow my head in resignation
To God's mercy, love and will.

"Where are, you Grace, my eyes, my comfort?"
The answer comes in sobbing breath,
"I'm by your side, my poor, blind mother,
We only part at the brink of death."

Gently Grace directs my footsteps;
His place is by another's side!
For awhile I draw the curtain,
Leave son and brother with his bride.



CHAPTER XLI.

Our Home in the World.

NO MORE we seek for joys that perish,
While we only live to die.
To die to gain a home immortal,—
Unfading joys beyond the sky.

“Mother, the world is full of sorrow,
By the sin-poluted, slain;
I almost think sometimes, dear mother,
The Savior’s blood was shed in vain.

“Foul deeds of robbery and murder
Are flying across the electric wire,
Thousands of homes, wretched people,
Caused by alcoholic fire.

“Still the liquid flames are reaching
From the cellar to the dome;
The annual loss of many millions,—
The loss of life and many a home,

“There are suicides around us,
Even in this little place,
Our business men who now are maniacs,
Ever stare me in the face.

“Last night my weary footsteps hastened
Homeward through the falling dew;
A child said, ‘Come,’ couldn’t refuse her,
That’s why I staid so long from you.

“A tear-stained face at the window,
She turned and placed for me a chair.
‘Grace, my heart is broke,’ she murmured
‘My once bright boy is over there.’

“‘Fathers and brothers went before him.’
The story she’d told to me before,
But I started as I listened,
While she told me more and more.

“‘My boy was bright,’ she continued,
Wiping the tears from her wrinkled face.
‘Is there a God?’ she asked fiercely,
If there is, then tell me, Grace.

“Why do men to devils turn,
I often wonder, but cannot see?
If there is a God of justice,
Why permit such things to be?

“‘Don’t say pray, you only mock me,
Thro’ long years I knelt in prayer;
If there’s a God, he did not hear me,’
Said the mother in despair.

“‘Justice will not always slumber,’
I said while I could say no more;
‘There is no justice,’ was her answer
As we parted at the door.”

Ever in the path of duty,
Tho’ the way be high or low,
Grace’s unfaltering footstep walking
Where slyly lurks the deadly foe.

While the savage thirst for blood,
Cruel hands may strike the blow,
The torture is but momentary
They are not by far the greatest foe.

CHAPTER XLII.

The Stage of Intemperance.

ACTORS crowd behind the curtain,
This not fiction now for you,
For flesh and blood is represented
In every scene that comes to view.

While our money pays the license,
For the stage the scenes are free;
Here is a program for a drama,
Come to the front where you can see.

He is dead, the bullet killed him,
Not uncommon, nothing new.
Near his heart was found one dollar,
The murdered man was dressed in blue.

Orders issued to pay the license,
Or quit the business and pay a fine;
They count the checks and pass them over,
'Tis money covering up a crime.

An M. D. of note and promise
Tired of life, but dare not die.
“Rum,” he said, “will nerve me to it,”
A suicide, and pass him by.

A dreadful crime, Judge Linch decides it,
“We wont procrastinate,” he said,
“Go get a rope at once and hang him
By the neck, until he’s dead.”

Near unto the high school building
A body hangs in broad daylight.
The coming man may look upon him
While nature hardens at the sight.

The honest man, a street car driver,
Is sighted out while he’s alone.
Was he guiltless, who bore that message
To the waiting bride at home?

At one and twenty thrice a murderer,
At last the lawyers end their strife,
In Stillwater the young man labors
Behind the prison walls for life.

Mother and daughter stood together
By a grave in coming night,
Turning our backs toward the gallows,
For we could not bare the sight.

"Thank God," he said "I have no brother,
Mother lived not to see this time."
Brother man, think while I ask you,
Are you guiltless of this crime?

With one more scene I'll drop the curtain,
The hour is waning into night,
I am weary with the labor,
And you are tired of the sight.

There is a grave beneath the willows,
A mangled body mould'ring there,
Died with the cruel lash upon him,
A blue-eyed boy with golden hair.

Hang him, they cry, "The wretched father!"
While there's none to intercede,
Could they but hear the accusing angel,
"You licensed him to do the deed."

CHAPTER XLIII.

Grace Strong's Mission.

WHILE our heroes are in battle
With the invaders of our land,
Grace Strong kneels upon the altar
With true women heart and hand.

Lays bare wounds at the feet of mercy
While her pen is dipped in blood,
Writes the name of PROHIBITION,
Guided by the hand of God.

Her pen glides while strength is given,
As she with unflinching hand
Repeats the name, the only weapon,
To drive the demon from our land.

From early morn till shades of evening,
Still writing on through blinding tears,
"Give me strength." I hear her whisper,
A maniac's laugh grates on her ears.

Reader, I beg you will not ask me,
Is, her story really true?
While she draws for you the picture,
The brightest side is brought to view.

While the weary days are passing,
I hear her pen, her deep drawn sigh.
I turn my sightless eyes towards her,
For I know that she is nigh.


Only a word in time is spoken,
May set in flame the mouldering spark,
Warming life-blood slowly ebbing
From the bruised and bleeding heart.

Thus with pen such words were spoken,
Has many time dispelled the gloom ;
WILLIAM HUBBARD, still I bless thee,
It cheered her pathway to the tomb.



CHAPTER XLIV.

The Fading Flower.

HE harvest past, summer ended,
The birds have sung their farewell song;
Sweet-breathed rose, with kindred flowers,
Has filled its mission, the flowers are gone.

Cold winds moaning through the branches
Where leaves unfold as spring draws near;
Leaves have fallen in mingled colors,
The benediction of the year.

The sky is laden with frozen crystal,
And while I hear the cold winds blow,
I listen to the sound of footsteps,
Coming through the falling snow.

James comes in with morning greetings,
Holding a package up to view,
"THE WORST FOE, I the honor,
Grace, I've brought your book to you."


“Why come forth this morning, brother,
Through the wind and falling snow?”
“Typical storms of life, my sister.
Mother I’ll show you THE WORST FOE.”

He placed my fingers on the letters,
Of the name to me so dear.
I pressed my trembling lips upon it,
Bathed it with a falling tear.

The opening bud while in the morning,
Looked out on this sin-cursed land,
Now the storm-crushed flower is fading
With the sickle in her hand.

CHAPTER XLV.

Come to The Christmas Tree.

“IS Christmas eve. ‘THE WORST FOE’ my
sister,
Hangs on the Christmas tree to-night.
Let us once more go together,
Come, dear Grace, the moon shines bright.”

“I will go in thought,” my child is saying,
“To where the blessed infant lay,
And kneel beside him in the manger,
Lying on his bed of hay.”

Heaven smile upon my children,
Is the thought that filled my mind,
They are taking their last footsteps
Together, on the shores of time.

They returned, and James has left us.
Her quick drawn breath falls on my ear:
With a groan of mortal anguish,
My heart grows faint with sickening fear.

As days go by, my grief controls me,
And forbidden tears will flow.
“Mother dear, not blind forever,
Tell me then what grieves you so.”

With choking sobs, I spoke of parting,
“Oh, Grace, I cannot stand the blow.”
“Trust in God!” she quickly answered.
“Tho’ his ways we may not know.

“You may go before me, mother,
But ere the call we must obey,
The hours would be long without you,
If you first are called away.

“You would miss my hand to lead you,
To guide your steps where’re you go,
My eyes to see the glad earth for you,
You would miss my voice, I know.

“I would miss your counsel, mother,
Miss your tender care for me;
Oh that we may go together
To the land where all can see.”

CHAPTER XLVI.

The Sunny South.

“**B**ENEATH the sunny sky, dear mother,
God will for us prepare the way,
Where December is as pleasant
As the balmy month of May.

“No deep snow, no long, cold winters,
The mocking birds are singing there,
Orange groves and laden fig trees,
Apricots and falling pear.

“He that careth for the sparrow,
And notes the lilies as they grow,
Will protect us if we trust him,
Care for us where’re we go.

“He will bless our efforts, mother,
It may be His holy will
To prolong our days by healing;
Whate’er may come we trust Him still.”

We wander in the land of flowers,
Fairest ones are plucked for you,
While they shed for you their fragrance,
Sparkling in the morning dew.

Far from native land and kindred
Standing beneath the Southern sky,
Amid the throng we see around us
Only strangers passing by.

Our weary footsteps are directed,
We're strangers in a southern home,
While kind hearts are all around us,
Then we know we are not alone.

As weeks pass we're cheered with kindness,
A gentle breeze plays o'er her brow;
"I feel I am growing stronger,
Mother," she said, "I'm better now."

Ofttimes we sang and talked together,
While hopes, then fears, my bosom swell:
I will pass, I must not linger,
On that time I cannot dwell.

All who tried to smooth our pathway,
Or welcomed us within their door—
May richest blessings rest upon them
'Till we meet on the other shore.



CHAPTER XLVII.

Atlanta.

BOUNTIFUL are gifts of nature,
With healing balm the mountain air,
Lofty spires, God's place of worship—
Were carnage and cannon ever there?

Come to springs of Ponce de Leon,
People of station and of wealth,
They who seek there naught but pleasure,
And they who only ask for health.

The rich, the poor, come to the fountain,
The convalescent's feeble breath,
The invalids drink the waters,
Thinking to stay the hand of death.

“Grace, my child, do you feel better?”
I hold her precious hand in mine.
“I'll be better on the morrow,
Mother, I'm hopeful all the time.”

With pent grief my heart is breaking
As I smile upon my Grace,
Smoothing back the silken tresses
From her pure, angelic face.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

The Last Hope.

MOTHER, let us walk together,
Together let us breathe the air."
Along the shady walk she led me
With her ever tender care.

"With each look I see new beauties,
Mother," she said, "I love this place."
"Let us now return, my daughter,
I fear you are growing weary, Grace."

"Not in doors, for I would tarry
Longer in the May day air.
Let us sit together, mother,
Here is for each of us a chair."


She must not know that I am weeping,
And a moment I turn aside,
To stay thoughts I must not utter.
Checking the grief I can not hide.

I bathed my face in cooling water,—
Again I bathed my burning brow,
I hear her voice, my child saying,
“ Grace is getting better now.”

Then I go and sit beside her,
We talk beneath a shady tree,
While she tells me of earth's beauties
That I can no longer see.

CHAPTER XLIX.

The Angel of Death.

IRDS swell their throats to greet the
morning,
The brightest sky of all the May;
Church bells ring the hour of worship,
It is the Holy Sabbath day.

“ You are looking hopeful, mother,
On this morning sweet and mild.
I am very happy, mother,
Come and sit beside your child.”

The angel death now hovers o'er her,
The icy lips have kissed her face.
Oh, death relentless must then take her,
Take from me my daughter Grace.

We know it not, God I thank thee,
Woe's last cup she did not see.
No, she did not know the anguish
As that cup was given to me.

Gently they her eyes forever
Close, as her loving spirit fled.
Low and tender words were spoken,
“ Poor, blind mother, your child is dead.”

Dearest child, I'm bending o'er thee,
Again I bathe thy face with tears,
Thine eyes are closed, no look of wonder,—
Come back to earth, you know no fears.

“Will I never hear her footsteps?
Must I listen but in vain?
No more soothe my throbbing temples,
No more calm my troubled brain.”

CHAPTER L.

To the People of Atlanta.



PHYSICIANS come together, counsel,
Baffle with the hand of death,
Never giving up the struggle,
Not until the parting breath.

You shared my grief, you tried to comfort,
You bore the burdens of the day,
As with tender, loving kindness,
You strove to take the care away.

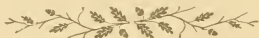
You bought for her, a pricey casket,
And laid her in her narrow bed,
Snow white flowers on her bosom,
Fairest wreath about her head.

Her calm, white face as in repose,
On her lips, a lingering smile,
With bowed heads they gathered round her,
And sobs filled all the room meanwhile.

Saints of earth have gathered round me,
And I hear them kneel in prayer,
Who can tell me that the angels
Of the Heavens were not there?

The bud hath grown, and the blossom
They bring me. By my child I stand.
I've drained the cup, give me the flowers
That I may place them in her hand.

Flowers she loved are all about her,
Magnolias and the blooming rose.
In words alone I can not thank you,
I leave it then with Him who knows.



CHAPTER LI.

The Lone Journey.



GO forth again in darkness.
Arms empty of the child I bear.
The child I once clasped to my bosom,
Child of my heart, my love and care.

Rest, my dear, there is no danger,
Together we are borne away.
No more the storms of earth assail thee,
Thy work is done, thou child of clay.

Though long and silent is thy slumber.
The work goes on, you live in fame.
While the world is growing better,
You left below a deathless name.

You loved the right for which you labored,
The time will come that thou wouldst see,
For the shackles will be broken,
The slaves of rum shall all be free.

Blind, I'm blind, her place is vacant,
The hand that led me is not there;
Who will now direct my footsteps
In this world with all its care?

Screaming engines, din of voices,
And my son I know is near,
Again he is clinging to me,
Whispering, "Mother, I am here."

CHAPTER LII.

Her Resting Place.

BROTHER weeping by his sister,
He looks upon her lifeless clay,
For her home is now eternal
In the land of endless day.

And an early grave they made her,
For her race was early run,
She lived, she died, she won the victory,
Filled the mission for which she come.

Her resting place,—go bring the flowers,
Transplant the trees that they may wave,
Where the red-breast now may linger
Around her peaceful home, the grave.

CHAPTER LIII.

Alone.

ALONE, alone, while time is passing,
Cold winds moan, and whispering, sigh,
I am thinking, ever thinking,
As the busy world goes by.

Her voice is still. The strings are broken,
Guitar untuned and silent stands;
Icy fingers, only bearing
Faded flowers in her hands.

Here her little store of treasures,
To which the sacred memory cleave,
Half worn shoes, and folded garments,
Here the dress with wrinkled sleeve.


Here her work she would have finished,
Her vacant chair, her pennies still,—
I'd ever look from earth to heaven,
Not on the past, thought conquers will.

Ofttimes my son, standing by me,
As he tries to comfort me,
In his voice I hear the sadness,
But his face I can not see.

A little girl now calls him papa,
His knee is her accustomed place,
A special love, he gives his daughter,
For the sacred name of Grace.

CHAPTER LIV.

Conclusion.

HE sun has set, a star is shining,
The star of hope its beams reveal;
Then of earth there is no sorrow
That kind Heaven cannot heal.

The Holy one from Heaven descending,
To the earth our burden bear ;
Angels of Heaven who adore him,
Are they but pleasure seekers there?

By the Heavenly dispensation,
Through the infinite plan of love,
Labor is rest. They never weary—
Angels are coming from above.

They are coming, who once gathered
Around the social family hearth,
Tho' their feet grew very weary,
O'er the thorny paths of earth.

Lo, I feel angelic presence,
Her hand is placed upon my head,
Within my soul I hear the whisper,
"Think not, dear mother, I am dead."

Ever coming, ever going,
Angels on the golden stair.
Grace is coming, standing by me,
Now she fills the vacant chair.

I am wandering in the valley,
Hands are reaching out to me,
“Only a step across the river,
To the land where you can see.”

I see her robed in spotless garments,
The radiant face so sweet and mild,
I hear the many words of welcome,
As I behold my angel child.

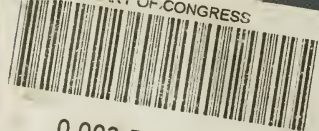
And look upon the “many mansions,”
Kept by angels of His care,
In the sunshine of His presence,
Perpetual flowers are blooming there.

No longer blind, yet she will lead me,
Where the ransomed hosts have trod,
To the everlasting fountains,
In the Paradise of God.









0 003 576 605 4